1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

Lakembans go to Mbau they hold their potlatch (*solevu*) indoors, while others hold it outdoors.

Totoya did not "turn quite" to Lakemba; it was not subject in any way, but only "acquainted" with Lakemba. It came to Lakemba in Christian times because Vuetasau, eldest son of Malani, the second Lord of Naiau, was related to Totoya (his father's father's mother was of Totoya). Until after Christianity was introduced, no wars were conducted against Moala and Matuku.

Tonga and Lakemba are related. Many Lakembans settled in Tonga some time ago. The following is related:

One woman of Mbengga called Waitha was brought to Lakemba to be the wife of the Lord of Tumbou. Their daughter was called Sungu. Sungu went to Tonga in the days, it is thought, when the clan of Thekena was chief. She married a Tongan chief, Tui Tufu, and had a son who took the name of Taifisi. The Taifisi now lives in Mataika in Vavau. Sungu was a fine woman and passed from one noble family to another, and when she died the nobles came together and built her a vault. Her brother, Wakafutu, settled in Koulo in Sapai. He was a strong man and was made chief and took the title of Tui Tumbou. If a man of Tumbou who has not been installed as Lord of Tumbou, goes to Koulo the kava faces the chief of Koulo; but if the Lord of Tumbou of Lakemba goes there he is first. When the nobles of Lakemba are angry they say to the people of Tumbou, "Shut up you are Tongans"; but that is not so; they are Fijians who went to Tonga. Tui Soso, the chief of Nukunuku, went over at the same time with elders of Vakano, and changed his name to Tui Vakano. He lived in Nukunuku in Great Tonga. Wathiwathi folk also went over to Tonga. There are also people of the clan of Narewandamu in Tonga; their names are: Ranjike, Vunivalu, Tui Lakemba (in Ofu, Vavau; he is a great noble in Tonga), Ndai, Mbalei, Ravuravu. They rose by being brave or hard workers in the fields. At the present day men of the families of Taifisi and Tui Vakano stand at the kava of the inauguration of the King of Tonga with blackened faces, wearing turbans, and carrying clubs, all which apparel is not Tongan. (Cf. 2, p. 428, 1921.) Formerly the young men went to Tonga to get tattooed.

The intercourse between Lakemba and Tonga is still active though nothing to compare with the old days when scarcely a week went by without a canoe coming in from Tonga. The Lakembans have many relatives in Tonga as the pedigrees show; many have Tongan blood in them, and many Lakembans are settled in Tonga.

Tongans come to Lakemba more freely. There was hardly a time when there were not two or three in Lakemba. They are burdensome guests, for they bring little and carry away much. They are sometimes brought over to teach new dances and anthems. The Lord of Tumbou claims that Lakemba is of higher rank (*turanga*) than Tonga.

Journeys are usually undertaken for the purpose of obtaining food or goods by potlatches, exchange, or begging. Lakemba people formerly went to the Southern Islands to exchange food for mats, canoes, and kava bowls. They also got mats from Moala and Totoya in exchange for painted bark cloth (*ngatu*) and oil. An informant says,

3: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934) 1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

clan's claim to the east side. However, the Tanggu clan enforces its claim by actual cultivation of crops on the island and by control of the fishing and turtle breeding there. But since such a claim is substantiated not only by tenure but also through the clan genealogies there was a constant dispute among nobles of Tanggu and Tokalau regarding their genealogies and the relative merits of the two claims.

The effect of the government policy concerning land ownership has been far-reaching. Native retention of ancestral lands has cemented the tie between hereditary social groups and the soil. A man cultivates the garden plot of his ancestors and frequently even builds his house upon the same house site. In spite of the changes taking place in the culture the link with the natural environment has not been broken. This has not only physical significance in that the natural resources upon which the old culture was built are still available, but also psychic significance in that a social group is still in close contact with its sacred places, sacred animals, and plants. The importance of this condition can hardly be over-emphasized. As long as the physical setting is retained there is a possibility of revitalizing a culture so that a satisfactory balance may be re-established in spite of its changing content. Evidence of new adjustment to the old environment is seen in the increase of the population in recent years—a sign of healthy and socially adjusted communal life which will be discussed in Chapter VI.

As a result of the land policy the native does not suffer from the modern western economic system. He is economically independent and does not need to compete with Europeans or Indians[32] in the struggle for existence. No matter how he chooses to earn his living he can always return to his own village and cultivate his ancestral lands. Hence there is no native unemployment or rehabilitation problem in Fiji.

[32] Since 1879, laborers have been imported into Fiji from India, and in 1936 the total Indian population in Fiji was 85,002. There are, however, no Indians in southern Lau.

5: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1949 OQ6 Lau OQ6

While we lack the data to describe these two types of biotics, we do know that their development in Lau has been influenced and limited by the following major factors.[9] First, rocks are of only two types: impervious volcanic and soluble limestones. Second, most of the islands are small, isolated, and closely surrounded by open sea at least 100 fathoms deep. They are separated from the main Fiji group to the northwest by a distance of some 200 miles and from Tonga to the southeast by some 400 miles. Third, located mainly between 17 and 19 degrees[10] south latitude and in the vicinity of 179 degrees west longitude, the Lau group has a tropical climate, the mean annual temperature being estimated at about 73 degrees Fahrenheit, the humidity range from about 70 to 90 per cent. Fourth, the islands lie in the belt of the southeast trade winds which prevail during the cool, dry season from April to November. This condition is strongly reflected in reef and island contours and in rock type distributions. During the remainder of the year, the warm, wet season, the southwest monsoon blows intermittently, especially from January to March when hurricanes may be expected. Fifth, practically all of the annual precipitation, which averages about 80 inches, falls during the wet season, much of it in the form of torrential downpours which erode basins and caverns in the limestone islands, and valleys in the volcanics. Sixth, the basic ecological balances of each island developed in the absence of large land animals, including man.[11]

By the time that the first men arrived in Lau in comparatively recent times, the delicately balanced, natural ecological arrangements, characteristic of southern Lau, had attained their basic patterns. The advent of man meant much more than the intrusion of a single species, namely *Homo sapiens*, as had been the case when many ocean- or air-borne species found their way to these islands. The advent of man meant the intrusion into the group of a whole complex of exotic species of both fauna and flora carried by man during his migration by canoe eastward into the Pacific basin. Culture-historical evidence in southern Lau[12] suggests that these included the pig, the dog, and the fowl, as well as various food plants such as yam, breadfruit and banana. Man brought, furthermore, various stone and shell tools such as adzes, gouges, awls and pounders with which he could somewhat alter the face of nature; various skills, such as fire-making, horticulture, stone-cutting, house-building,

[9] Ladd and Hoffmeister, 1945; Bryan, 1948; Thompson, 1940a, 1940b.

[10] Vatoa and Ono-i-Lau lie farther to the south, and accordingly have a slightly cooler climate.

[11] According to Bryan (MSS.): "Except for birds and insects there is a poverty of native animal life in Lau. The only mammal noted was the rat. About a dozen species of water birds and over 28 species of land birds were encountered throughout the group. Two species of land snakes and one banded water snake were caught. Lizards of various species were abundant. The largest was the green *vokai*. Various sizes of geckos and skinks were more abundant. Land crabs, including the large 'coconut' crab and hermit crabs, were present in quantity."

[12] Thompson, 1938.

5: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1949 OQ6 Lau OQ6

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167 basketry and mat-plaiting; and he brought the sailing canoe with which he traveled between the islands and connected their heretofore disparate ecological arrangements.

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174 Not much is known of these first human inhabitants of Lau but, on the basis of internal evidence in the present-day culture and of archeological findings,[13] we infer that they settled on the larger islands and formed small clan hamlets in the bush. On the limestone islands the aborigines subsisted chiefly on jungle fruits, edible green leaves from the bush, fish, pigs and fowl, while on the volcanics this basic diet was supplemented with such garden produce as yams.

After the first men arrived, a new ecological arrangement seems to have gradually taken form on the basis of the old; and recently introduced species of flora and fauna, including *Homo sapiens*, became a part of the total balance. The culture of the first human inhabitants of Lau indicates that, on the foundations of attitudes and behavior patterns which they had brought with them into Lau, the aborigines developed a culture which integrated the human group with the other species of the natural community in environmental context and which symbolically explained, validated and supported the group's way of life.[14] What the effect of the aborigines was on the environment we do not know. It has been suggested, however, that man's cultivation of the volcanic islands has been responsible to some degree for the fact that much of their flora has degenerated to rank grasslands and other low growth. The limestone localities, on the other hand, apparently were and still are less affected by man's presence. The soil is less fertile and less responsive to cultivation of food plants by means of technology available to the natives, while the low, dense, scrubby forest, its tangle of underbrush, together with the rough, pitted terrain, help to discourage change through human activity.[15]

The next major event in the culture history of the area was the conquest of the aborigines, apparently about fifteen generations ago, by a small band of warriors reputed to have come from northwest Viti Levu in west Fiji. Marrying aboriginal women who brought them parcels of land, the conquerors settled on the more fertile islands and founded new clans. The newcomers were very different in skills, interests and values from the aborigines. They were a raiding, fishing people who preferred to sail and gather their food from the sea rather than to till the soil. The conquerors, moreover, were fascinated

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[13] Thompson, 1938, 1940b.

[14] In time apparently the migration of their ancestors from the west was forgotten and the aborigines of Lau came to believe that they had originated locally in some natural phenomenon, such as a tree or an animal. The people of each island also had a species of bird and a species of fish which was sacred to them, and they believed in a local abode of the dead. Their deity was apparently a great, pervasive, spiritual power believed to be the source of all *mana* and was worshiped at sacred places such as caves, trees or stones. [15] Bryan, 1948.